

# NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting

## March 3, 2010 MINUTES

Location: Newton City Hall War Memorial Auditorium

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Present:	Commissioners Joe De Vito (Chair), Richard Dyer, Donna Gordon; Advisory Members Tony Bibbo, Marianne Cook, Chris Fortunato, Matt Green, Ofc. Jeff Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephanie Pelkowsky, Stephan Ross, Terance Sack, John Staulo, Kirsten Tuohy <u>Students:</u> Zachary Eagle, Gerry Lueng
Regrets:	Commissioner Robert Staulo; Advisory Members Peter Harrington, <u>Students:</u> Tamara Matama, Kyle Olson, Zoe Pepper-Cunningham, Adam Sangiolo, Ariana Tabatabaie
Staff:	Beverly Droz, Director, Human and Volunteer Services
Guests:	Rich Catrambone (NSHS), attorney Frank Wolpe, Representatives from the Barry Boys & Girls Club: Joleane Anza, Taylor Arcuri, Elizabeth Bianchi, Christina Caira, Danny Carson, Kelli Lawless, Heather MacDonald, Davante Maxwell, Nahir Paez, Marcus Richardson, Emma Schertz

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The meeting was opened at 7:10 PM and chaired by Joe De Vito.

Introductions were made. We welcomed Rich Catrambone, NSHS counselor who has presented to the Youth Commission at other meetings; attorney Frank Wolpe who is Chairman of the Newton Crime Prevention Commission and a Human Rights Commission Advisory Council member; Heather MacDonald and the many students from the Barry Boys & Girls Club.

**A motion** was made and approved to accept the minutes of February 3, 2010.  
There was nothing new for the Treasurer's report.

### **Restorative Justice**

Joe gave a brief overview of how the Youth Commission (YC) has been involved over the past months with consideration of sponsoring the Restorative Justice (RJ) Program.

Donna Gordon, chair of our RJ Committee, reminded members that at the last meeting she had presented the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the RJ Pilot Project. The YC members made some comments and changes, and agreed on March 23 for a community night to open the pilot project to the public. Donna's next step was to present the revised draft from the Feb. 3 meeting to The Newton Partnership for their approval as well. Donna received feedback from Susan Linn, the director, that they felt it was too soon for a public community meeting – so we will not be holding the meeting on March 23.

Before discussion began, Bev gave some details from Susan Linn's memo to help the YC understand the perspective of The Newton Partnership. Overall Bev noted their scope of services as it relates to the RJ project and they are focused on the high school level to start. If the programs are successful at both NNHS and NSHS, they would look at a training to introduce RJ to the middle schools. Their grant funding is highly restrictive and monitored.

Frank Wolpe was asked to present his experience since he participated in a RJ meeting on Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>. Frank introduced himself and the role of the Crime Prevention Committee. He described the RJ circle that he participated in at NSHS. It was a serious racial incident and he was surprised at the level of anger as students first began to speak. The circle lasted 2 hours and was indeed a teachable situation with a positive effect on each participant. He described it as growth, healing, and transformational. Frank said he was very impressed by the process and he is here tonight in support

of RJ circles. He had written a letter describing the experience, without detailing any confidential information. He thinks NNHS should definitely adopt this program, and he wants to be supportive of the YC's efforts.

Joe thanked Frank on behalf of the YC for his presentation and willingness to be involved.

Donna handed out a revised RJ Pilot Program draft which still contains a Statement of Purpose with the goals and the agencies we expect to partner with us; Implementation proposals; and the RJ Pilot Program Process. (See copy in file).

There was overall discussion of what our next steps are, given the delineation of The Newton Partnership's focus. Our RJ subcommittee will re-group and work on expanding the "Oversight Committee" which will involve community members outside of the YC. The following members present agreed to meet: Joe DeVito, Rick Dyer, Chris Fortunato, Ofc. Jeff Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephanie Pelkowsky, Terry Sack. Donna will contact members.

The YC publicly thanked Rich Catrambone who has been helping us over the past months, and who is willing to volunteer his time in the future to help RJ go public.

### **FCD Programs**

It was noted that the Freedom from Chemical Dependency Programs will take place at NSHS on April 16 and at NNHS on April 28.

### **Other Business**

Joe reported that he met with **Mayor Warren** and discussed with him what the YC does.

The students from the **Boys & Girls Club** introduced themselves as from the Keystone Leadership Club. Heather MacDonald is the teen leader at the Club. They recently held a dance to benefit the people of Haiti. They are active in various leadership initiatives and community service efforts. They were not familiar with the RJ program and thought it interesting. We invited them to return anytime.

Ellen reported on **Stop Medicine Abuse** – an effort to address the misuse and abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs. She reported how a parent's son overdosed on Coricidin and nearly died. She handed out a packet of information on how to take action. The NCSC's Teen Centers are working to have all Newton pharmacies put drugs such as this behind glass doors to make it more difficult for youth to purchase them. Ellen spoke about the need to educate parents and the public. She's going to ask all agencies that deal with youth to sign on in support of urging pharmacies to do this. It was noted that it will be important to alert all the PTO's and even our state representatives and Aldermen. We thanked Ellen for her report and information.

Bev reported that the quarterly Youth Interagency Task Force will meet on March 17 at 10am here at City Hall and that any YC members are welcome to attend.

Bev handed out flyers of The Newton Partnership: Circle of Respect: Are You In? There are many events planned during the week of March 14 – 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

The next meeting **will be Wednesday, April 7 at 7:00PM**

Respectfully submitted by Beverly Droz